

Home & Community Based Alternatives Program: Who Do We Serve?

Written by Peggy Matlin, Aging and Adult Services

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Since the 1970s, "Alternatives" has been the bedrock of service programs for older Utahns. The goal since then has not changed: we support older, frail, low income seniors who are able to stay in their own homes and communities as long as possible, thus avoiding premature institutionalization in nursing homes.



A typical patient is very much like "Helen," a woman I visited in Kaysville last year. Helen was 83 years old, living alone in a subsidized apartment, and had one living son, who worked as a long-haul trucker. He assisted her with transportation and errands, however, his job required him to be gone a lot.

Helens medical diagnoses included asthma, arthritis, hypertension, spinal degeneration, hiatal hernia and macular degeneration. Her case manager arranged an array of services to support her and keep her safe at home, and coordinated the Medicare services of physical therapy and CAN (which expired 30 days after hospitalization, with the services paid by the Alternatives program). Services included Home Delivered Meals 5 days a week, a personal care aide to assist with bathing, a homemaker to keep her home safe and clean, and an emergency response button to wear. Additionally, he coordinated Senior Companions services to help with her feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Helen is sincerely appreciative of all the support which enables her to stay home; she is able to sleep in her own bed and watch the birds from her couch each day.